



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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CHAFEE WORKS WITH ADMINISTRATION TO KEEP GEAR UP PROGRAM AFLOAT IN RHODE ISLAND

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee today announced that the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings has informed him that \$250,000 in federal funding will be sent to Rhode Island to fund the GEAR UP Program. GEAR UP seeks to increase disadvantaged students' secondary school completion and postsecondary enrollment by providing support services and by assuring students of the availability of financial aid to meet college costs.

"I was pleased to receive a call from Secretary Spellings this afternoon informing me of her decision to allocate \$250,000 to the Rhode Island Children's Crusade to help continue the important work they do with the GEAR UP program," said Senator Chafee. "I will continue to work with the Administration and my colleagues in Congress to seek additional funds so that this critical program can be restored in order to maintain the high quality services it is providing to over 4,000 disadvantaged children in our state."

The Children's Crusade, the only Rhode Island organization that receives federal GEAR UP funding, recently learned that their application for future funding was denied. Senator Chafee worked with the Administration to convince the U.S. Department of Education that zero funding would effectively eliminate the program in Rhode Island. He joined Senator Reed and the other members of Rhode Island's congressional delegation in sending a letter last month requesting that the funding be reconsidered.

The Children's Crusade has run a GEAR UP program since its authorization in 1998. Rhode Island's program began prior to GEAR UP's authorization and was cited as a model for the original GEAR UP legislation. The program has consistently received high marks on their annual reviews by the Department of Education.

The Rhode Island program starts working with children in third grade using AmeriCorps funds, and follows them through high school.